



# Office of Genesee County Sheriff

SHERIFF ROBERT J. PICKELL

April 25, 2017

UNDERSHERIFF  
CHRISTOPHER SWANSON

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY  
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Honorable Tommy Brann  
77<sup>th</sup> District Representative  
Michigan House of Representatives  
N-1096 Housing Office Building  
P.O. Box 30014  
Lansing, MI 48909

HB 4332  
HB 4333

Dear Representative Brann:

I recently spoke to an animal rights activist who said that the abuse and neglect of dogs is on the rise. I disagree with that opinion. I suspect that law enforcement has turned a blind eye to animal abuse, mainly due to staffing problems and high crime rates.

I recently obtained a warrant for an owner who abused his dogs with a metal pipe, causing severe injury. Due to current statutes, the prosecutor was only able to issue a misdemeanor charge. In another more severe case, I investigated and received warrants for a woman who starved five puppies and one grown dog to death. The penalty for this charge is a four-year felony.

These are just two examples of the many investigations that occur around Genesee County, and the State of Michigan. The current penalties are not sufficient to properly respond and deter animal abuse and neglect. I believe that if penalties were more severe, and the public was made aware, it would reduce abuse and assist with prosecution.

I offer my full support for strengthening our laws as they pertain to animal abuse and neglect. I would be willing to come to Lansing, and discuss this issue with you and your committee. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to assist you.

Yours very truly,

ROBERT J. PICKELL  
SHERIFF